

DCI
3 September 1983

TALKING POINTS
NSPG re Lebanon

Prospects for continued factional violence are high. The Army probably will not be able to operate successfully in both West Beirut and the Shuf-Alayh region.

- Most of the Muslim fighters in Beirut apparently eluded the Army sweeps, and many are eager to resume attacks against Army units.
- The Army has still not entered in force the Shia Muslim slums south of the city. If it does, heavy street fighting is again likely, the Druze fighters probably will resume shelling Beirut in support of Shia militias.
- The Druze now are likely to offer even stiffer resistance to the Army deployment into the Shuf-Alayh region.
- The risk of more MNF casualties is high. Druze and Shia fighters believe US played significant role in Lebanese Army operations this week.

Prospects for resolving confessional problems are poor, and Gemayel's position now depends largely on the Army's performance and cohesion.

Some Shia soldiers have deserted the Lebanese Army earlier this week to join the Shia Amal militia. So far the numbers are quite small but continuing Army moves against Muslim fighters in Beirut, and eventually in the Shuf region, will further test loyalties of the Army's Muslims troops.

We can expect later Syrian effort to complicate Gemayel's problems. They

SECRET

[redacted]
are likely to provide increased support to the Druze militia and press Shia and other pro-Syrian militias in Beirut to divert the Lebanese Army by stirring up renewed fighting in the city. We have one report [redacted]

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[redacted] that Damascus is prepared to send thousands of men in Druze uniforms to directly support its allies in the Shuf and Alayh. We can expect increased artillery fire on MNF forces from areas which are under Syrian control.

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